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SEN Case Officer

Special Educational Needs Team

Job Description & Person Specification



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## Job Information

Post Title	• SEN Case Officer
Reports to:	• SEN Team Manager/Senior SEN Case Officer
Grade and Salary:	• RG6b (SCP 28-31)
Location	• Civic Offices, Reading
Conditions:	• 37 hours per week
Direct reports to the post:	• None

## Job Purpose

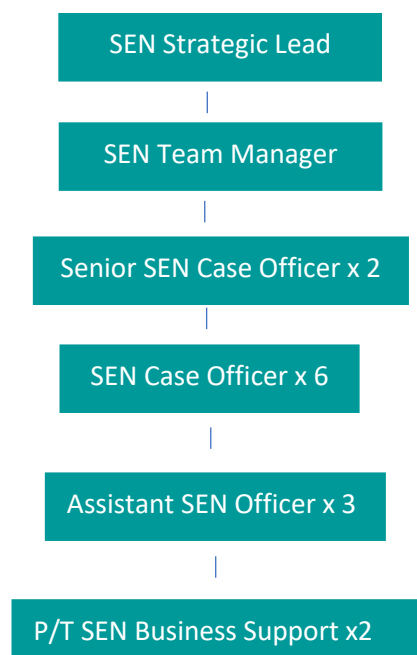
Brighter Futures for Children is improving outcomes for Reading's children, young people and families.

We are an independent, not-for-profit-company, wholly owned by Reading Borough Council. Our responsibility is to deliver quality children's services, early help, education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services in the borough.

The position of SEN Case Officer is to co-ordinate Education, Health and Care (EHC) Assessments and plans for a caseload of children and young people (CYP) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), leading to high quality outcome focused EHC Plans and working in collaboration with families and professionals throughout the process.

To lead and co-ordinate the casework required to meet Brighter Futures for Children's (BFfC) statutory duties such as phased transfers, to ceasing, initiating, processing and maintaining EHC plans for Children and young people between the ages of 0 – 25 years old.

## Designation of Post within Company Structure



## 1. Your role

- Ensure the Education, Health and Care assessment process is carried out efficiently, consistently and in line with the statutory requirements set out in the Children and Families Act and the SEN Code of Practice. This will include ensuring that we meet our Statutory timescales and manage the Statutory processes especially in relation to transition points, the ceasing, initiating, processing and maintaining of EHCPs. Lead on advising partners on the key SEN legislation and ensure the Code of Practice is implemented.
- Work in partnership with parents and ensure that children, young people and their families are fully involved in the assessment process and the plan builds upon the aspirations of children and young people.
- Support effective multi-agency working to support the development of comprehensive Education, Health and Care Plan, Annual Reviews and positive multi-agency working relationships. This may include chasing assessment reports, facilitating multi-agency meetings and meetings with families.
- Chair the EHC Production meeting with family, school and other agencies, ensuring that it is conducted using person centred approaches and that the family are able to participate fully.
- Ensure that the EHC Production meeting addresses all aspects of the child's development and facilitate the meeting in a way which encourages creative, personalised solutions to achieve the child's outcomes.
- Draft high-quality Education, Health and Care Plans, which are clear, accessible and outcome focused and in line with the legal and statutory requirements described in the Children and Family's Act and SEN Code of Practice.
- To ensure that parents, educational psychologists, head teachers and others, as appropriate, are fully consulted in the assessment of an individual child and that they are kept fully informed as to the reasons for the decisions made by the LA.
- Discuss the completed assessments with parents, including clarifying assessment content to aid understanding and present a summary to the SEND Panel for allocation of resources.
- Work with the family, and other agencies as required, if an EHC Assessment is refused or if an EHC Assessment does not result in a statutory EHC Plan, in order to plan a way forward.
- Represent BFFC at admissions panels for maintained special schools and resource units and be responsible for communicating the outcomes of panel meetings to parents and other authorities.
- Be a named Officer for a number of identified schools, both within and outside of the authority (mainstream and special) and special resources.
- Manage and maintain a designated caseload of children/young people with special educational needs ensuring that BFFC's statutory obligations are met. This will include co-ordination of EHC needs assessment, monitoring the agreed Education, Health and Care Plans and ensuring that a review is held at least annually, attending where possible, and that the plan continues to meet the identified needs of the child and young person.
- Ensure Education, Health and Care plans are amended following annual reviews within statutory timescales.
- Create and maintain up to date records ensuring the relevant databases are updated. Collate and write reports as required for meetings such as the SEN Panel, funding requests and for SEND tribunals.

- Represent the SEN team at reviews, departmental, multi-professional, inter-agency meetings (office based or within schools) and supporting Managers with Tribunal cases as required.
- To be responsible for seeking school or College placements in mainstream and maintained special schools within Reading and in neighbouring authorities and to provide support and help to identify appropriate educational placements for Children, Young People and Students aged from 2 to 25.
- To assess, prepare and review all home to school transport requests for pupils with special educational needs in accordance with Reading Borough Council's Home to School Transport Policy.
- Work in collaboration with other agencies and the Commissioning Team to ensure the best use of resources to meet the outcomes for children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan.
- Ensure that the child or young person's welfare remains paramount and that any safeguarding issues are appropriately managed in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children and Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures.
- Promote equality as an integral part of the role and to treat everyone with fairness and dignity.
- Recognise health and safety is a responsibility of every employee, to take reasonable care of self and others and to comply with RBC Health and Safety policy and any service-specific procedures / rules that apply to this role.

## 2. Relationships – who you will work with

Internal:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All levels of staff within Brighter Futures for Children</li></ul>
External:	<b>Develop and promote strong partnerships with:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Schools &amp; Colleges (both Reading &amp; Out of Borough)</li><li>• Parents &amp; Families</li><li>• Children's Social Care Teams</li><li>• The Virtual School Team</li><li>• Reading IASS</li><li>• Other LA SEN Teams</li><li>• Health Professionals</li></ul>

## 3. What your performance will be measured against

- Personal objectives set as part of probation, 1:1s, Appraisal & your continuous professional development.
- Quarterly performance targets including statutory timescales.

## 4. Your level of autonomy

- Required to work as part of a small team as well as using own initiative to deliver objectives

## 5. Personal Attributes

- Confident
- Confidentiality
- Approachable
- Friendly
- Uses initiative

## 6. Scope of Job (Budgetary/Resource Control/Impact)

- The post holder has no direct budgetary responsibilities.

Special/Other Requirements/Responsibilities of this Post

Level of DBS check required for this post	Enhanced with a check of the barring list(s)
If *, does the post require a check against the list of people barred from working with vulnerable adults?	YES
If *, does the post require a check against the list of people barred from working with children?	YES
What other security/safer recruitment clearances are required for this post?	NONE
Is this post "politically restricted"?	NO
Responsibility for Health & Safety:	Health & Safety Level 1
Please specify responsibility for implementing the company's risk management strategy.	N/A
Please specify any other Statutory Duties and/or responsibilities of this post not already covered in the "Main Duties & Responsibilities" above	N/A

## Person Specification

### Qualifications & Education

Essential:

- The equivalent of GCSE passes in English and Maths
- Education to degree level or other equivalent evidence of ability - to have the required level of intellectual ability for the role and the required higher order skills.
- Relevant training in relation to special educational needs

### Experience

Essential:

- Experience in Special Educational Needs and Disability arena either in Education, Social Care or Health.
- Experience of working with parents and families - to be able to develop excellent working relationships with families and work effectively with them in a person centred way. To be able to deal with challenging situations.
- Experience of multi-agency working - to have an understanding of the roles of different agencies, to be able to lead multi-agency meetings effectively, manage negotiations, challenge where necessary and mediate if required.

## Knowledge, Skills, Abilities & Competencies


### Essential

#### Knowledge

- Good working knowledge of a range of SEN and disabilities - to ensure that assessments and plans are of a high quality and appropriate to the child's specific needs. To be able to interpret professional reports from a range of agencies and use them to develop outcomes based holistic plans.
- Knowledge of the Children and Families legislation including the SEN Code of Practice - to ensure that practice is fully compliant with legislation and statutory guidance on SEN and disability and that practice would stand up to scrutiny in the event of SEND Tribunals, LGO complaints or judicial review.
- Knowledge of other related legislation, including legislation governing Adult Social Care, the Children Act and safeguarding processes - to ensure that practice is consistent with wider statutory requirements.
- Knowledge of the Equality Act particularly in relation to children and young people with disabilities - to ensure that practice is consistent with Equality legislation and to support schools and other agencies to work in a way which complies with this legislation.
- Understanding of and commitment to person centred approaches, personalisation and key working functions - to be able to work in a way which supports and empowers parents and to support other professionals to work in a person centred way, including participation in training as required.
- Thorough knowledge of the services and agencies which might be involved in EHC assessments and EHC Plan delivery - To ensure that appropriate and good quality assessments are carried out as part of the EHC process.

#### Skills & Abilities

- High level oral communication skills including the ability to communicate effectively in a variety of situations, face-to-face, telephone or meetings/groups - to be able to manage meetings, discussions and negotiations effectively. To be able to participate in delivery of training for other professionals as required.
- Excellent written communication skills including ability to draft clear and concise plans - to be able to produce EHC Plans to a high standard.
- Negotiation skills: ability to manage oral and written negotiations sensitively, appropriately and successfully - to be able to resolve any issues or difficulties which might arise during the EHC Assessment process. To be able to manage parental expectations about resources.
- Interpersonal skills: the skills to relate effectively to parents, professionals and colleagues - to establish and maintain productive working relationships. To be able to influence behaviours of others in order to achieve the best outcomes.
- Mediation skills - to be able to mediate between parents and professionals or between professionals where difficulties in relationships or differences of view arise.
- IT skills including ability to use Microsoft Office software - to produce correspondence and documents.
- Ability to use SEN Module of Synergy - to access data about children and store data electronically.
- The ability to set and meet deadlines - to meet statutory and other deadlines and manage workload effectively.

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- Analytical thinking and ability to make sound judgements based on appropriate evidence - to be able to analyse complex issues and plan an appropriate way forward. To ensure that decisions are sound and can be clearly justified.
  - The ability to work in a pressurised environment - to be able to manage a large workload, prioritise and meet deadlines.

Specific Working Requirements

- Ability to attend meetings in and outside Reading through being a Car driver with regular use of a car or other means.
- Be prepared to lead on service development and policy work within the service.
- A willingness to work outside office hours on an occasional basis in order to respond to specific service requirements.
- A satisfactory Enhanced DBS.
- Ability to work at any council site across the Borough to meet the needs of the service.
- Commitment to increasing knowledge of educational, legal and child development issues relating to special educational needs.